

Menominee Nation News

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Traditional burial rites conducted for ancestral remains

Special to
Menominee Nation News

On November 10th, the Menominee Historic Preservation Department repatriated 21 Menominee

ancestors from the Neville Public Museum. Three of the 21 ancestors came from the Outagamie Historical Society. The Menominee ancestors were dug-up from Menominee village sites located near the bay of Green Bay and Kaukauna area along the Fox River in the late 1600's and early 1700's. The repatriation of Menominee ancestors or human remains was made possible by provisions of the Native American

Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

Tribal Chairman Apesamahkwat, Vice Chairman Wendell Askenette and Tribal Legislators, Wilmer Peters, Margaret Snow and Lew Boyd, along with Menominee Veterans, and students from the Menominee Indian

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Jackie Bird makes return appearance at MTS



Native entertainer Jackie Bird performed two shows on December 1 at Menominee Tribal School. She sang, performed hoop dances and even got the young audience involved. Story and photos on page 14.

Two tribal members announce write-in candidacy

By Yvonne Kaquatosh
Menominee Nation News

KESHENA, WI - Anthony L. Awonohopay recently notified the Menominee Nation News of his intentions to run as a write-in candidate in the Menominee Tribal Legislative race.

If elected, Anthony emphasized that he would advocate no less than 60% of the distribution funds from the "Menominee Fairness Act" to be given to members of the tribe, leaving 40% to be invested in community programs. Also, Anthony supports MTE in their decisions, stating "MTE has been managing our forests for years...providing the needed revenue to help keep the programs on the reservation operating...as long as the

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Menominee Tribal Daycare Provides a Gift to the Nation

By Brandon Waupekenay
Menominee Nation News

Mrs. Randy's class at the Tribal Daycare made a special Christmas ornament in the shape of a bell. This millennium bell will join many other ornaments from 34 Wisconsin cities on the Millennium tree in Washington, D.C. Signatures from the staff at the daycare, the Tribal Vice Chairman and Chairman, along with some glitter, make the colorful gift a success.

The Millennium tree is making its way from Wisconsin's North Central Experimental Forest in the Nicolet Chequamegon National Forest, near Rhineland Wisconsin, to Washington. The tree is an 80 year old White spruce (*Abies glauca*) and some 70 feet tall with a trunk diameter of 28

inches. It hales as the tallest tree ever to occupy the west lawn of the Capitol and marks the 30th anniversary of the National Capitol Christmas tree, also known as the "People's Tree." It will host more than 5,000 hand-crafted ornaments from Wisconsin children and adults as well as 10,000 lights.

Introduction to Millennium:

The tree is wrapped and put in a cradle that supports its trunk. Because of the branches so wide, wider than a 2-lane road, they need to be tied together. The cradle which holds the tree has a special waterbed mattress which constantly gives the tree sugar water.

The tree is lifted onto the cradle by a gigantic crane which places it on a truck. The tree then embarks on a tour

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ANCESTORS:

School District joined Historic Preservation staff at the Neville museum for a short ceremony before the remains were transported to the Menominee reservation.

"It's an historic day for the Menominee people because we can bring our ancestors home and bury them in Mother Earth (Kokohmasahkomikonah) on the Menominee reservation" said Apesanahkwat while at the Neville Museum. Apesanahkwat did not cast blame on any particular group for disrupting our ancestors by digging them up but added that "It was a crime against humanity for what was done to our ancestors in the past, being dug-up." Apesanahkwat thanked the Neville for their cooperation in the repatriation efforts.

The remains were transported to the Menominee Logging Museum where traditional services were conducted. The ancestral remains were smudged with cedar and placed in specially made pine boxes. A Ghost Feast held at the Logging Museum was well attended by tribal members. After the Ghost feast community members stayed with the remains throughout the night. A breakfast was held at sunrise for the men who dug the graves and built 'spirit houses'. A final ghost feast was held at noon on November 11th, Veterans Day, where hundreds of Menominee tribal members were in attendance.

Traditional Menominee burial rites were conducted for the remains at the repatriation burial grounds. Hundreds of tribal members came to the Ghost Feasts, stopped by to visit their ancestors, or came to the final Menominee traditional burial rites over the two-day period.

Historic Preservation staff and tribal members spent long hours cooking for the feasts and breakfast. Contributions received from the reservation community to help with the repatriation was overwhelming.

Menominee elders from the community gave advice on how to conduct traditional Menominee burial rites for our ancestors during the whole repatriation process. Dewey Thunder, Jr., an authority on traditional Menominee burial customs, was there to guide us through the reburial. "If this was your family... Grandmothers or Grandfathers on museum shelves you would want to bring them back for reburial," said Mr. Thunder.

The Menominee Language and Culture Commission also provided guidance in the repatriation process. 'A Final Repatriation Policy' developed by Historic Preservation, was recently approved by the Menominee Tribal Legislature.

Historic Preservation Director David Grignon said, "It is a great feeling to begin the repatriation process and bring our ancestors back home. Our Ancestors remains do not have to remain on museum storage shelves because we now have the opportunity to bring them home," he added.

The Historic Preservation Department is currently working with other museums and institutions to repatriate Menominee ancestors. There is a minimum of 40 Menominee ancestors that will be repatriated to the Menominee Tribe for reburial in the spring of 2000.

The Menominee are the first tribe in the state of Wisconsin to go through the repatriation process since the Act became law in 1990.

MILLENNIUM:

of Wisconsin. The people are then able to sign their name and put their seasons greetings to the country on the side of the trailer which shields the tree during it's tour, a giant Christmas card if you will. Once the tree reaches Milwaukee on November 27, the truck will board a special Amtrak train and head to Union Station in Washington, where it will arrive on the morning of November 29.

Wisconsin's Millennium Tree will travel more than 3,000 miles. It will be on the road for about 18 days from when it is cut in Wisconsin on November 11 to when it is delivered to the US Capitol on November 29.

From that point it will take 8 days for White House gardeners and the Landscape Architect of the Capitol to prepare the tree for the lighting ceremony. It will be decorated using cherry picking machines. The Tree Lighting Ceremony is scheduled for December 9th.

WRITEIN:

people, the land and the culture remain intact."

Mr. Awonohopay will be joining incumbent Police Chief William 'Kuzco' Beauprey who previously announced plans to run as a write-in for the top law enforcement position with the Menominee Tribe.

Both Awonohopay and Beauprey were unsuccessful in their bid to secure a spot on the ballot for the final election in January. Awonohopay received 149 votes in the legislative primary while Beauprey placed third among five candidates with 315 votes in the police chief race.

Beauprey's decision to run as a write-in will bring the total number to three candidates vying for the Chief of Police position - Keith Tourtillott, Judith Duquain and William 'Kuzco' Beauprey.

On another note, Keith Tourtillott, the top finisher in the Chief of Police race and Menominee Tribal Legislative candidate has withdrawn his name from the Tribal Legislative race. "My

decision to withdraw was my assessment based on conversations with the public about holding two positions and the conflict of interest between them."

Keith stated that he wanted to be assured of his right to due process, should he be removed from office. "I'm concerned about the security of the position as Chief of police, we've had four police chief and three have been removed...it's not a very secure position." Now that he has been reassured of his rights to go before the judicial system, if need be, by the Chief Justice, he will run only for the Chief of Police position.

As a result, Louis Dixon will be placed on the ballot. As we all know, Louis would like to get 80% of the monies from the lawsuit for tribal members, leaving only 20% for community programs and much needed upgrades of the present programs already in place. In stating his views on the subject he said, "We should get it all...the judgement money is probably the most money we will ever receive as tribal members from our government...our programs are supported by the casino, federal grants and the government."

Dixon also went on to say that there are nine people on the legislature, and that they've demonstrated that they don't know what the chairman is doing, and he believes it is time for a full legislative arena to work for the tribe. "It's time to put an end to the one man rule on the reservation," he stated.

Dixon's opinion was based on the fact that the chairman was not present at a recent general council. However, the vice-chairman indicated that the chairman "is not out of touch and if need be, we can reach him at any given moment."

Davey Jean Peters, Secretary of the Election Commission was notified by Keith Tourtillott to withdraw his name from the race.

Legislative candidates vying for three seats on the governing body are: incumbents Eugene Caldwell, Apesanahkwat, Wendell 'Sim' Askenette, and challengers Orman Waukau and Sylvia Wilber, and write-in candidate Anthony Awonohopay.

The final election will be held January 12 & 13, 2000.